



12 Risks of Overindulging

1. **Center of the universe syndrome:** A child should understand early on that the world will not solely focus on *them*.
2. **Disrespectful attitude:** Having disrespect for one's own things easily leads to disrespect for other people's things.
3. **Helplessness:** Doing for children what they should be learning to do themselves takes away the opportunity for them to learn how to be competent.
4. **Confusing wants and needs:** Young children can't tell the difference between wants and needs and have to be carefully taught.
5. **Overblown sense of entitlement:** Adults who were overindulged as children often feel that they are entitled to more of everything and that they deserve more than others.
6. **Irresponsibility:** Constantly protecting children from experiencing the consequences of their actions and not holding them accountable for completing tasks leads to irresponsibility.
7. **Ungratefulness:** Soft structure in the home can lead to individuals being less likely to be grateful *for* things and *to* others.
8. **Poor self-control:** Parents need to insist that the child learn self-management skills including delayed gratification.
9. **Relationship problems:** Issues that result from overindulgence—such as poor conflict-resolution skills and expectation of immediate gratification—spill over into all other relationship forms, from friends, to family, to workplace.
10. **Materialistic values and unhappiness:** Children who were overindulged as children are more likely to develop materialistic values in adulthood (selfish and greedy) and grow up to be unhappy.
11. **Personal goals distortion:** Studies show that the more an individual was overindulged as a child, the more likely it is that their personal life goals are **externally motivated**—fame, fortune, vanity—as opposed to **internal aspirations** such as developing character and cultivating meaningful relationships.
12. **Spiritual involvement:** Overindulged children are more likely to become adults who are not interested in spiritual growth, have difficulties finding meaning in times of hardship, and are less apt to develop a personal relationship with a power greater than themselves.

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